

SENATOR BETH BYE

Fifth District

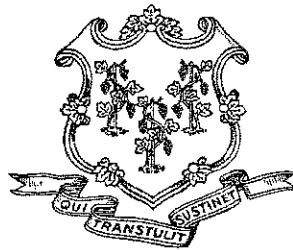
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February 5, 2013

Testimony to the Aging Committee

**SB 521: AN ACT CONCERNING A REPORT ON THE SURVEY OF ACCESSIBILITY
IN AND TO STATE BUILDINGS**

Senator Ayala, Representative Serra, and members of the Aging Committee:

My name is Beth Bye, State Senator for the 5th district, representing West Hartford, Farmington, Burlington, and Bloomfield.

I come to you today, first to thank you for raising SB 521 to require a survey of the accessibility of state buildings. As I have stated to this committee in previous years, accessibility is a cause that has been championed by a very dedicated group of constituents of mine from Farmington, some of whom are here today.

But I am also here to ask this committee to consider modifications to this bill so that it more closely mirrors the goals of HB 5353, as proposed by Rep. Demicco and myself. Because it is not absolutely known which modifications will be required to make our state buildings exceed the ADA requirements, HB 5353 necessarily will require state buildings to be surveyed.

Additionally, by modifying this committee's raised bill to put a date-certain on required modifications, you will signal to the disability community that their ability to access these buildings is as important as that of the rest of the citizens of our state. Because these modifications will have a cost, and will take time, I would welcome the committee to set a date several years out. In our own bill, Rep. Demicco and I have proposed 2021.

Residents of this state, like my constituent Ray Elling, should not be forced to rely on others for the simple action of opening a door to a state building. It is a frustrating symbol to him and countless others, and is a reminder of the unfortunate and inexcusable lack of access they have to the institutions of our state.

Thank you.